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BY HAND DELIVERY

Blanca S. Bayó
Director, Records and Reporting
Florida Public Service Commission
2540 Shumard Oak Boulevard
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0850

Re: Docket No. 960786A-TL and 981834-TP

Dear Ms. Bayó:

Enclosed for filing are the original and fifteen copies of the Post-Workshop Comments on Behalf of AT&T Communications of the Southern States, LLC., TCG South Florida, Inc., and AT&T Broadband Phone of Florida, LLC., Covad Communications, Florida Digital Network, ITC^DeltaCom, Inc., KMC Telecom, Inc., WorldCom, Inc., and Network Telephone.

By copy of this letter, this document has been provided to the parties on the attached service list. Due to its voluminous nature, the service copies do not include Exhibit 6, which is the red-lined version of the Change Control Process document submitted to the Georgia Public Service Commission on January 30, 2002. If you need a copy of this exhibit, please contact the undersigned.

Very truly yours,



Richard D. Nelson

RDM/jlm
Enclosures
cc: Parties of Record

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FPSC-COMMISSION CLERK

BEFORE THE FLORIDA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

In Re: Consideration of BellSouth Telecommunications, Inc.'s entry into interLATA services pursuant to Section 271 of the Federal Telecommunications Act of 1996)	Docket No. 960786-A-TL
)	
Petition of Competitive Carriers For Commission Action To Support Local Competition In BellSouth Telecommunications, Inc.'s Service Territory)	Docket No. 981834-TP
)	

Filed: March 18, 2002

**POST-WORKSHOP COMMENTS ON BEHALF OF
AT&T COMMUNICATIONS OF THE SOUTHERN STATES, LLC.,
TCG SOUTH FLORIDA, INC., AND AT&T BROADBAND PHONE
OF FLORIDA, LLC; COVAD COMMUNICATIONS;
FLORIDA DIGITAL NETWORK; ITC^DELTACOM, INC.;
KMC TELECOM, INC.; WORLDCOM, INC.; AND
NETWORK TELEPHONE**

Pursuant to the Florida Public Service Commission's (the "Commission's" or the "PSC's") request, AT&T Communications of the Southern States, LLC., TCG South Florida, Inc., and AT&T Broadband Phone of Florida, LLC ("AT&T"); Covad Communications ("Covad"), Florida Digital Network ("Florida Digital"), ITC^DeltaCom, Inc. ("ITC"), KMC Telecom, Inc. ("KMC"), WorldCom, Inc. ("MCI"); and Network Telephone (collectively

DOCUMENT NUMBER-DATE
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"ALECs") hereby submit their consolidated Post-Workshop Comments in the above-referenced dockets. ALECs have prioritized¹ the issues discussed in the comments within each domain.

I. INTRODUCTION

The February 18, 2002, workshop revealed numerous OSS issues that continue to thwart ALECs' ability to compete effectively in Florida,² and demonstrate that BellSouth's Operational Support System ("OSS") continues to fail to provide the service and support necessary for CLECs to compete with BellSouth on a level playing field.³ The workshop also revealed that in certain critical areas like change management, BellSouth simply does not understand or does not want to understand ALECs' needs and concerns. The Commission should not recommend 271 approval until the OSS problems identified by ALECs have been resolved.

For each domain, ALECs have identified deficiencies within BellSouth's OSS that cripple their ability to compete and that must be corrected promptly. ALECs discuss these issues in priority order. Until these issues are addressed, and the implemented solutions verified and audited to insure compliance, BellSouth's systems will continue to discriminate against ALECs and the goal of local competition in Florida will be thwarted. Recognizing this Commission's desire to conduct a constructive exercise, ALECs propose solutions for each of the OSS

¹ The prioritization presented in these comments is the majority view of the ALECs participating in these comments. Accordingly, individual ALECs may have differing views regarding the priority certain issues should be assigned. Attached as Exhibit 1 is a chart identifying the individual prioritization by ALEC of these issues.

² The OSS deficiencies identified in the workshop and these comments are those that most impact ALECs' ability to compete. Some of these deficiencies are being considered in connection with the on-going Florida OSS test, but many of them are not. These comments should not be read to assert that these are the only OSS deficiencies in BellSouth's systems.

³ This view is supported by BellSouth's most recent Monthly State Summary ("MSS") report. For January 2002, BellSouth failed to provide nondiscriminatory support for 20% of the submetrics which had both a performance standard and ALEC activity.

deficiencies described below. ALECs can only agree with the Commission's sentiment that now is the time for solutions to these chronic problems that threaten ALECs' viability in Florida.

II. PREORDERING PROBLEMS PERSIST

As this Commission is aware, preordering "is potentially the most critical piece of the entire OSS process."⁴ Yet, the testimony presented at the workshop demonstrates BellSouth's OSS remain deficient in this important area. For example,

- BellSouth does not provide ALECs the ability to integrate preordering and ordering functions at parity with its retail operations;
- BellSouth's Customer Service Records ("CSRs") are incorrect in several important aspects;
- ALECs cannot view and resolve pending service orders;
- BellSouth does not provide ALECs' Facilities Reservation Numbers ("FRNs") via EDI at no cost;
- EDI remains unavailable for preordering; and
- LFACs continues to be unavailable for certain ALECs and fails to contain accurate and complete facilities information.

These important issues must be resolved to ensure that BellSouth provides the nondiscriminatory access to its OSS mandated by the Telecommunications Act of 1996.⁵

A. BellSouth Does Not Provide ALECs the Ability to Integrate Preordering and Ordering Functions At Parity (Priority 1)

1. The Problem

As ALECs explained during the workshop, BellSouth still does not provide the parsing functionality necessary to achieve successful, reliable, and efficient integration of preordering

⁴ Tr. at 25.

⁵ Pub. L. No. 104-104, 110 Stat. 56 (1996), codified at 47 U.S.C. § 251 *et seq.*

and ordering functions with a reasonable expenditure of ALEC programming resources.⁶ While BellSouth implemented what it claims to be acceptable CSR parsing for ALECs on January 5, 2002,⁷ significant problems exist with this “implementation.” These deficiencies include BellSouth’s failure to provide important business rules related to the parsing release according to the timeframe specified in BellSouth’s Change Control Process (“CCP”); a lack of stability in the implementation of the parsing software itself; delayed or inadequate workarounds for identified defects; and failure to provide a fully-fielded parsed CSR.

a. BellSouth did not provide ALECs timely business rules

BellSouth admits that it did not provide the business rules for the parsing software according to the time frame set forth in its CCP.⁸ As several ALECs explained at the workshop, this delay prevented them from testing with BellSouth as soon as the software was released.⁹ Before ALECs could use the software BellSouth provided, ALECs needed to make substantial coding changes to their systems in order to run BellSouth’s new software.¹⁰ Because BellSouth provided its business rules late, ALECs could not complete their coding efforts prior to the release. Consequently, ALECs’ ability to test and use the new parsing functionality was delayed.

⁶ BellSouth points to ITC as evidence that ALECs can build their own parsing engines. Tr. at 36. As ITC explained, however, BellSouth’s implication that ITC “can just parse [its] CSR and do wonderful things with it is really inaccurate.” Tr. at 19. Indeed, under ideal circumstances, ITC’s parsing success rate is only as high as 70%. *Id.*

⁷ BellSouth admits that its January release was flawed and continues to be plagued by software defects. These problems will not be resolved until April or May at the earliest. Tr. at 13.

⁸ Tr. at 37.

⁹ See e.g., Tr. at 12, 19.

¹⁰ Tr. at 19.

BellSouth attempts to minimize and to excuse this delay by rationalizing that the “information was provided in other forums and in other documents sufficient for an ALEC to really have developed their system and to be ready to test it.”¹¹ Indeed, BellSouth claims that the new pre-ordering rules are largely a “restatement” of the BellSouth TAG/API Guide (“Guide”) that BellSouth published on November 19, 2001.¹² These attempted justifications lack factual support.

Prior to issuance of the pre-ordering rules on December 15, 2001, ALECs made clear to BellSouth – and BellSouth did not dispute – that the then-existing BellSouth documentation was inadequate to enable them to perform the necessary software coding. Furthermore, the Guide did not contain the specifications that ALECs needed to code their systems to reflect the new parsed CSR functionality. As AT&T pointed out to BellSouth after receiving the Guide, the document did not even contain fields that BellSouth had previously defined as required, or define how various lists of information on the CSR (such as telephone numbers and listed names) were related.¹³ Accordingly, ALECs could not have developed software to utilize BellSouth’s parsed data and have been ready to test it without BellSouth’s final business rules.

- b. BellSouth’s parsing software is not stable and BellSouth’s workarounds are inadequate

Since BellSouth first released its parsing software, 24 notices of defect have been issued. BellSouth has recently addressed a number of those defects, but at least 7 of these identified

¹¹ Tr. at 37-38.

¹² Tr. at 38-39.

¹³ See electronic mail message from Bernadette Seigler (AT&T) to BellSouth Change Control Manager, dated November 20, 2001 (attached as Exhibit 2); electronic mail message from Bernadette Seigler to BellSouth Change Control Manager, dated November 19, 2001 (attached as Exhibit 3).

defects remain outstanding.¹⁴ BellSouth has categorized the remaining 7 defects as “low impact.”¹⁵ Although BellSouth has instituted what it calls “workarounds” to address the parsing software’s deficiencies,¹⁶ these workarounds, published three days before the workshop, place a significant burden on ALECs. Each requires ALECs to manually determine if the CSR they have retrieved is impacted by a defect, or else risk rejection of the Local Service Request (“LSR”). If impacted by the defect, the ALEC must take additional manual action to ascertain the correct information necessary to complete the LSR. The seven defects that cause this additional work are not scheduled to be corrected until March 23, 2002, and there is no assurance that BellSouth’s flawed systems development process will result in this new release working. Thus, although BellSouth contends it has implemented CSR parsing, that parsing is effectively unavailable for ALECs retrieving CSRs.

- c. BellSouth’s software does not provide ALECs with a fully-fielded parsed CSR

Setting aside the technical problems associated with BellSouth’s parsing software, BellSouth’s CSR parsing release fails to provide fully-fielded parsed CSRs. At least eleven fields for which there is data present in the CSR are not included in parsed format. These are fields ALECs have requested specifically.¹⁷ Other Incumbent Local Exchange Carriers

¹⁴ Tr. at 12, 36.

¹⁵ Tr. at 37.

¹⁶ Under the Change Control Process (“CCP”), BellSouth is required to publish workarounds for defects classified as “low impact” within three business days. The defects were all submitted to the CCP on January 31, 2002, while the workarounds were not published until February 15, 2002.

¹⁷ The 11 fields ALECs have requested are: **TOS** – Type of Service, **NAME** – End User Name (not for directory delivery), **LST** – Local Service Termination, **DGOUT** – DID Digits Out, **HNTYP** – Hunting Type, **HTSEQ** – Hunting Sequence, **SGNL** – Signaling, **STYC** – Style Code, **TOA** – Type of Account, **LNPL** – Listed Name Placement, and **BRO** – Business/Residence Placement Override.

("ILECs"), like SBC and Verizon, provide these fields in parsed format. Currently BellSouth only has scheduled to implement parsing for two of these fields.¹⁸

2. Proposed Solutions

ALECs have been requesting a parsing functionality at parity with that enjoyed by BellSouth's retail operations since September 1998, yet this function is still not fully available to ALECs.¹⁹ The solution for this problem is simple. BellSouth has been given ample opportunity to fix these problems on its own. Given its continued resistance to providing Florida ALECs

¹⁸ In February, BellSouth issued change requests CR0651 and CR0652 announcing plans to provide parsing for six of these fields in March. The change requests were initially published on February 7. On February 12 BellSouth declared these changes were regulatory mandates based on this Commission's June and September 2001 Orders in Docket No. 000731. BellSouth scheduled the change requests for implementation on March 23, 2002. Parsing for the six fields should have been provided in BellSouth's January 5, 2002 release of its CSR parsing functionality. On February 21, BellSouth announced that it had decided to reclassify these change requests as ALEC initiated, that it was not scheduling the implementation of the four fields associated with CR0652, and insisted that the ALECs vote concerning the implementation of the two fields associated with CR0651. CR0651 is now scheduled for implementation on March 23, 2002.

¹⁹ BellSouth was originally ordered to provide parsing by the Florida Public Service Commission ("FPSC") in an order dated June 28, 2001. In that order, the FPSC stated:

We agree with AT&T that data should be parsed and should be available to AT&T at the same level BellSouth provides itself. In the interim, in order to accomplish parsing themselves, field delimiters and the related rules to apply those delimiters must be provided to the ALEC upon request.

* * *

Reviewing the dates indicated above, it appears the implementation date for parsed CSRs has been delayed for reasons that are not adequately explained. As noted, the issue of parsing was first brought up in September 1998 and a year later was prioritized for implementation in 2000. In March 2000, the status of the parsing issue was significantly changed when it was changed from being targeted for actual implementation (April 20, 2000) to merely being studied (subteam being formed to perform planning and analysis). June 2000 saw parsing as the number one pre-ordering issue in the CCP, while in September and December 2000 the implementation dates were again moved back. We find these slippages are unreasonable.

See Order No. PSC-01-1402-FOF-TP, issued June 28, 2001, in FPSC Docket No. 00731-TP, *In re Petition by AT&T Communications of the Southern States for Arbitration of Certain Terms and Conditions of a Proposed Agreement With BellSouth Communications, Inc., Pursuant to 47 U.S.C. § 252*, pp. 117-119. BellSouth, however elected to ignore the FPSC's order (most likely because the order did not set a timetable for implementation).

with service that is consistent with BellSouth's retail operations, the time has now arrived for the Commission to require BellSouth to implement fully-fielded parsing 20 business days following the Commission's order. The Commission also should require BellSouth to correct all other future defects in its parsing software within 20 business days of their verification.²⁰ After these steps are complete, this Commission should require KCI to audit ALECs' parsing capability as part of the on-going third-party OSS test. This Commission should establish a date certain for the results of KCI's investigation.

B. BellSouth's Customer Service Records Are Inaccurate (Priority 2)

1. The Problem

As the workshop revealed, another BellSouth OSS deficiency that greatly handicaps the ALEC community is that BellSouth's CSRs are inaccurate.²¹ ALECs have identified three causes for BellSouth's inaccurate CSRs. First, the CSR does not agree with the information in BellSouth's RSAG and switch databases. Second, the pre-migration CSR does not accurately reflect what is on the customer's line. Third, BellSouth fails to update the post-migration CSR on a timely or accurate basis. These problems lead to frustrated and angry Florida consumers, and have a chilling effect on ALECs' ability to compete.

The CSR is the only available source for the information necessary to pre-qualify a customer for ALECs' services. The CSR is supposed to contain an accurate record of the customer's existing services, equipment, and directory listing. To better understand the problems that can be caused by CSR inaccuracies, take—for example—a customer who requests

²⁰ The 20 business day interval requested here is consistent with the ALEC's requested implementation interval for the correction of "medium" impact defects discussed below in the section regarding the Change Control Process.

²¹ Tr. at 21-22, 25-26.

that his service be switched from BellSouth to an ALEC with all existing features and services. The customer expects that all of the services he enjoys, such as call waiting or hunting, will be available after his service is migrated to the ALEC. BellSouth's CSR, however, often fails to provide an accurate list of the services on that customer's account,²² and when the customer migration from BellSouth occurs, the services not listed on the CSR will be lost. Understandably, this causes anger and frustration on the part of the customer who expects to receive the same services he had with BellSouth. The customer will contact the ALEC to restore the missing services.

However, once the migration has occurred, ALECs can only make changes to their customer's service once the post migration CSR is updated. The post migration CSR update does not occur until BellSouth updates its billing systems. The update of BellSouth's billing systems and the post migration CSR can not occur until all associated internal BellSouth service orders are determined to be error free. When this process is delayed ALECs are unable to make changes to the customer's service. ALEC's have no way to know that BellSouth's internal process has been delayed.

When the ALEC issues new LSR to restore the services lost as a result of the initial inaccuracy of the CSR, or BellSouth's failure to properly implement the ALEC's LSR, that LSR will be rejected if the post migration CSR has not been updated or has been updated inaccurately. Manual intervention by BellSouth service representatives in the LCSC and billing center is required to correct the CSR and issue the orders to restore the proper customer service. This of course causes further delay, customer frustration and dissatisfaction.

²² Tr. at 25.

2. Proposed Solution

The solution to this problem is twofold. First, BellSouth should perform a routine data clean-up of the RSAG, CSR and switch databases to ensure the databases are in alignment. Second, BellSouth should mechanize the post-migration updates and provide a billing completion notification within 24 hours of physical service order completion.²³ In this manner, ALECs will be assured that the information present on the CSR accurately reflects the reality of the customer's account.

C. **BellSouth Does Not Permit ALECs to View And Resolve Pending Service Orders (Priority 3)**

1. The Problem

BellSouth does not permit ALECs to process any type of order for a customer—including a migration—if there is a pending service order on a customer's account. This problem could be resolved quickly if BellSouth's OSS allowed ALECs to view and resolve pending service orders; instead—as the Commission has observed—BellSouth has in place a process that is “completely bureaucratic, inefficient, and lengthy.”²⁴ This process harms Florida consumers by delaying ALECs the ability to migrate customers quickly and efficiently.

Under BellSouth's Byzantine procedures, once an ALEC's order is rejected or clarified stating that there is a pending service order, the ALEC must contact its customer to determine

²³ A billing completion notification would inform the ALEC when the customer migration occurred and that the billing change was completed. Tr. at 57. Accordingly, if the ALEC did not receive a billing notification for one of its orders, the ALEC would be aware that the migration was pending. This would allow the ALEC to investigate the issue promptly. MCI proposed the billing completion notification through BellSouth's change control process. *Id.* BellSouth rejected this change. Other LECs like Verizon and SBC provide a billing notification. *Id.*

²⁴ Tr. at 52.

whether and what orders are pending against the account.²⁵ The ALEC then must contact BellSouth to request BellSouth to verify whether the pending service order has been completed and to update the CSR. If the order has been completed, the ALEC must ask its customer to request the service order number from BellSouth so that the ALEC can provide BellSouth's Local Carrier Service Center ("LCSC") the BellSouth service order number demonstrating that the pending service order should be removed. If the service has not yet been provided, the ALEC must request that the customer contact BellSouth to cancel the pending service order. Through this entire process, the customer is prevented from migrating his service. This process is required even if the problem is an internal BellSouth error that has caused the "pending order" (even an ALEC migration request) to fail to complete through the billing system. In this case, the ALEC must simply wait until BellSouth completes the billing change.

Once the pending service order is removed, BellSouth does not notify the ALEC to indicate that the migration can go forward. The only way for the ALEC to know that the issue has been resolved is to go back and pull the CSR again.²⁶

It is also important to note that many Florida customers are needlessly forced to endure this process by nothing more than BellSouth's failure to keep its records up to date. As Florida Digital explained, for many customers affected by this problem, BellSouth completed the pending service orders weeks before the customer's attempted migration. Accordingly, not only was the customer's migration delayed by BellSouth's "completely bureaucratic, inefficient, and

²⁵ Tr. at 21.

²⁶ Tr. at 51-52.

lengthy process,” the problem this process was supposed to resolve existed only in the recesses of BellSouth’s poorly maintained database.

2. Proposed Solution

ALECs recommend that this Commission require BellSouth to permit them the ability to view and update pending service orders and grant ALECs access to the portion of BellSouth’s OSS that sends pending order information to BellSouth’s retail arm. In this manner, ALECs can directly act to resolve the pending service order. As the Commission suggested, ALECs, once authorized by the customer, could act on the customer’s behalf to take whatever steps are necessary to migrate the customer to the ALEC and ensure that the desired services are provided to the customer.²⁷

D. BellSouth Does Not Provide Facilities Reservation Numbers for EDI At No Cost (Priority 4)

1. The Problem

To send a DSL order electronically Network Telephone needs a Reservation Identification Number (“RESID”) or Facility Reservation Number (FRN). Network Telephone currently obtains RESIDs through the Local Exchange Navigation System (or “LENS”), but there are times that the LENS Database is not accurate or updated and Network Telephone must go to the Complex Resale Support Group (“CRSG”) to get an FRN. Network Telephone used to be able to request FRNs from CRSG and then send its orders electronically. CRSG, without notice, stated that Network Telephone no longer could do this, but had to pay for a loop makeup inquiry (at a cost of \$46.00 per inquiry in Florida) in order to send the order electronically. The only other option given Network Telephone was to request an FRN and provide an LSR to be

²⁷ Tr. at 59-60.

faxed from the CRS, thus requiring Network to pay the manual processing charge. BellSouth stated the reason it did this was because it had to recoup some of its costs in doing the loop makeup. In other words, BellSouth arbitrarily decided to stop affording Network Telephone an inexpensive electronic method to obtain FRN/RESIDs and send orders. Instead, they now insist NTC order this manually, and at much greater expense.

2. Proposed Solution

BellSouth must provide ALECs FRNs at no cost and permit ALECs to submit FRNs electronically.

E. EDI Is Not Available For Preordering (Priority 5)

1. The Problem

BellSouth's current pre-ordering system, TAG, is based on a proprietary implementation of the CORBA software system. Its business rules and processes are governed solely by BellSouth and do not meet the requirements of the Ordering and Billing Forum (OBF), the industry association that develops the business rules that allow ALECs to compete in multiple environments with the same OSS. BellSouth should agree to implement an EDI standard pre-ordering process such as that used by Verizon and to use Interactive Agent to allow ALECs to communicate with BellSouth's OSS on a real time basis. WorldCom requested this upgrade via Change Request 0186, which was placed submitted by WorldCom in September of 2000. Also Change Request 0101 was placed in July of 2000 by a vendor, requesting an EDI solution and also ranked. To date neither of these requests has been deployed.

2. Proposed Solution

BellSouth should offer its wholesale EDI customers a pre-order solution comparable to other ILECs.

F. Significant Issues Related to LFACS Are Outstanding (Priority 6)

1. The Problem

Covad explained to this Commission that BellSouth's Loop Facility Assignment Control System ("LFACS") does not contain accurate and complete facilities information.²⁸ DSL service can only be provided over a clean loop. Accordingly, an ALEC offering DSL service must ensure that the loops it requests are free from impediments such as load coils. As Covad explained at the workshop, prior to ordering a loop from BellSouth, it queries the LFACS database to determine whether there are load coils on the loop.²⁹ If the data in LFACS indicates the presence of such an impediment, Covad can request conditioning of the loop to remove the impediment at the outset. The information in LFACS, however, has proven to be inaccurate. ALECs have ordered loops believing that there were no impediments, only to discover at the provisioning stage that conditioning was required. At that point, the ALEC must cancel the order, pay a cancellation fee and resubmit the order with a request for conditioning.³⁰ This deficiency causes unforeseen provisioning delays, prevents ALECs from providing timely DSL service, and causes ALECs to incur additional expense because of the inaccuracy in BellSouth's system.

Compounding this problem is the fact that some ALECs—like AT&T—lack access to the LFACS database altogether despite BellSouth's promises to make access available. A Memorandum of Understanding ("MOU") between BellSouth and AT&T that became effective May 15, 2001, requires that the LFACS database be made available to AT&T, but BellSouth has

²⁸ Tr. at 9-10.

²⁹ Tr. at 9.

³⁰ Tr. at 10.

yet to make good on this requirement.³¹ Although BellSouth indicated during the workshop that it plans to provide AT&T access to LFACS by May 18, 2002,³² given its delay of more than a year in providing this access, the Commission should order that access be granted immediately. If BellSouth, in fact, sticks to this revised date, LFACS access would be provided a full year after it was originally promised. Additionally, in a meeting between AT&T and BellSouth on March 1, 2002, AT&T discovered that the LFACS solution delivered on May 18, 2002, will not address AT&T's issue of identifying the customer to which BellSouth has a facility assigned.

2. Proposed Solution

ALECs propose that BellSouth change its current loop modification process to permit ALECs to preauthorize loop modification. This solution would permit an ALEC to submit an LSR informing BellSouth that while the LFACS database indicates that no load coils are present on the loop, BellSouth may remove any impediment that it discovers during the provisioning process without requiring the ALEC to submit an additional service request. This solution is efficient and does not impose an undue burden on BellSouth. Indeed, Qwest and SBC already provide this process to ALECs.³³

Finally, this Commission should also ensure that BellSouth finally honors its commitment to provide ALECs access to LFACS.

³¹ The COSMOS report offered by BellSouth as an alternative to LFACS does not deliver the information that AT&T needs to deliver timely and accurate service its customers. In addition to being difficult to use, the COSMOS report does not link busy pairs to a specific customer location, telephone number or purchase order number as LFACS does. This makes COSMOS impractical as a tool to pre-check facilities or to reconcile the databases.

³² Tr. at 31.

³³ Tr.at 10.

III. ORDERING

BellSouth continues to deny ALECs nondiscriminatory access to ordering and provisioning functions. OSS problems identified at the workshop included the following:

- BellSouth's mechanized order processing is inadequate -- manual handling of orders is excessive;
- BellSouth fails to remove ADSL USOC codes promptly
- BellSouth provides invalid clarifications;
- BellSouth places unauthorized local freezes on consumers' lines and fails to remove them promptly;
- BellSouth provides incomplete clarifications;
- BellSouth's LCSC escalation process must be improved;
- BellSouth returns incomplete FOCs;
- BellSouth's Due Date Calculator "fix" must be verified; and
- BellSouth's ordering systems experience frequent outages.

A. BellSouth's Mechanized Ordering Processing Is Inadequate – Manual Handling Of Orders Is Excessive (Priority 1)

1. The Problems

BellSouth's excessive reliance on manual processing to handle ALEC orders is discriminatory and adversely impacts competition. BellSouth's OSS processes the orders of its retail operations electronically and without manual intervention for *all* its products, services, and transactions. In contrast, *all* ALEC orders for IDSL loops, UCL-ND loops, and any loop that needs conditioning must be submitted manually.³⁴ BellSouth is the only incumbent carrier that

³⁴ Tr. at 69-71; Covad presentation at slide 8.

discriminates in this fashion, forcing ALEC orders to be handled manually when these same orders are mechanized for its own retail operations.³⁵

Excessive use of manual processing to handle ALEC orders is discriminatory and adversely impacts consumers and competition in several important respects.

- Manual processing delays timely order status notices for ALEC LSRs that fall out for manual processing. For example, it takes BellSouth approximately 12 hours on average to provide a rejection notice and approximately 18 hours to provide a FOC for electronic LSRs that fall out for manual processing. In contrast, it takes less than 15 minutes on average to send a rejection notice or FOC when the LSR flows through and is processed electronically.
- Manual processing severely delays the issuance of a FOC, and—because due dates are assigned at the time the system generates a FOC—electronic LSRs that fall out for manual processing are also delayed.
- Electronic LSRs that fall out for manual processing face the risk of input errors. LCSC Input errors could lead to a different service being “installed” than that which the ALEC actually requested on the LSR.
- Manual processing of LSRs is more costly than processing LSRs that electronically flow through.³⁶
- ALECs are less likely to launch a mass marketing campaign if BellSouth continues to rely so heavily on manual processing.³⁷

These problems will only increase as ALEC volumes increase. As BellSouth admits, “[w]e make mistakes, particularly when there is human intervention associated with processing [an]

³⁵ Tr. at 71.

³⁶ *Id.*

³⁷ As Covad pointed out, “we’re not going to add 600,000 people to our network faxing orders the way BellSouth - - when BellSouth can do it electronically.” Tr. at 120.

order.”³⁸ Unless ALEC orders flow through BellSouth’s systems at the same rate as BellSouth’s retail systems, BellSouth is discriminating in a way that harms both Florida consumers and the ALECs. Electronic LSRs that flow through are more likely to be processed quickly, accurately, and at less cost by BellSouth than manually processed LSRs. As a result, flow through provides benefits to consumers, including less time on the phone placing orders, earlier due dates, lower risk of inaccurate provisioning, and ultimately lower prices because of lower order processing costs.³⁹

BellSouth’s reported monthly flow-through rate for residential retail orders in October, November, and December 2001 was 94 percent or higher. Because that percentage includes service representative input errors, the actual flow-through capability of BellSouth’s retail operations is nearly 100 percent. In sharp contrast, one third of all ALEC orders receive manual processing at BellSouth’s LCSC regardless of whether those orders were submitted electronically or manually.⁴⁰ Indeed, Network Telephone presented evidence at the workshop that demonstrated that for a given month 79% of Network Telephone’s overall manual fallout was caused by BellSouth.⁴¹ Despite the ALECs continued focus on flow through ordering, BellSouth’s problems persist. In fact, according to BellSouth’s January MSS report, BellSouth missed the Residence, Business, and UNE flow through benchmarks. Further, as several ALECs noted, BellSouth’s Flowthrough task force has not improved the disparity between ALECs’ and

³⁸ Tr. at 208.

⁴⁰ Tr. at 75.

⁴¹ Tr. at 65.

BellSouth's flow through.⁴² This lack of effectiveness stems, in part, from BellSouth's failure to implement the Flowthrough task force's requests. To date, BellSouth has fully implemented only 5 of the Flowthrough task force's requests. An additional 10 are scheduled to be implemented by November 2002. However, there are 20 pending requests for which no implementation date is scheduled. Included in these are issues ALECs have identified as significant problems such as issues concerning multi-line hunting and related purchase order numbers ("RPONs") for LSRs.

It is time for this Commission to intervene in this area to help give Florida consumers a meaningful choice in the marketplace. BellSouth's retail operations have electronic ordering and flow through capability that is far superior to that provided to ALECs. This lack of parity gives BellSouth a distinct advantage because it results in delays for ALEC orders, it increases the probability of error, and it increases ALECs' cost of operations, while ultimately lowering the quality of service ALECs can provide to their customers.

2. Proposed Solutions

This Commission should require BellSouth to implement swiftly the Flowthrough task force requests. This implementation should not come at the expense of other ALEC requested changes and the correction of software defects introduced by BellSouth as a result of their poor system development and testing processes. The implementation of flow through changes should be made in addition to the other changes and should not be used to deny ALEC requested changes. The Commission should further require that residential UNE-P orders with retail

⁴² Tr. at 66.

features such as call forwarding and voice mail, among others flow through. In addition, the Commission should require BellSouth to identify all of the reasons that prevent an order from flowing through BellSouth's systems⁴³ and to fix any defects in this process that are within its control.

B. BellSouth Fails To Remove ADSL USOC Codes Promptly (Priority 2)

1. The Problem

The problem with ordering service for a customer that has ADSL service is two-fold. First and foremost, BellSouth refuses to permit an ALEC to provide voice service to a customer over the same line BellSouth uses to provide DSL service (*e.g.* FastAccess). BellSouth currently provides DSL service to more than 600,000 customers in its territory and it plans to increase that number to 1.1 million by the end of this year. For any of those customers to migrate to an ALEC, they must first disconnect their FastAccess service. BellSouth's policy creates a substantial barrier to entry that will become greater over time.

The second aspect of the ADSL problem concerns how BellSouth implements its policy. BellSouth includes an ADSL USOC on the CSR of customers that receive DSL from a BellSouth affiliate or Network Service Provider ("NSP").⁴⁴ It should be noted here that in the vast majority of cases, BellSouth is the Network Service Provider. ALECs encounter very few instances in which the ADSL has been ordered by another wholesale NSP. It is the ALECs' understanding that BellSouth is even including ADSL USOCs on customers that do not even have DSL service, but rather have simply been pre-qualified for such service. BellSouth is rejecting ALEC orders

⁴³ This explanation should not be limited to the definition of "designed manual" that BellSouth provided to the Georgia Commission.

⁴⁴ BellSouth has indicated that the ADSL USOC is included on the CSR for provisioning purposes to indicate that the DSL service is billed to the NSP, who then bills the end user customer.

for customers with an ADSL USOC on their CSR and requiring that the code be removed from the customer's CSR before BellSouth will process the order. To accomplish this, an ALEC must notify its customer that the customer cannot retain its existing DSL service if it wants to convert to the ALEC's service. The ALEC must also ask the customer to notify its NSP that the customer no longer wants the DSL service. In turn, the NSP must then contact BellSouth to have the ADSL USOC removed from the customer's CSR.⁴⁵ The process BellSouth has established to remove the ADSL USOC from the customer's CSR is unmanageable and unrealistic. Requiring customers to become involved in removing the ADSL USOC code from BellSouth's CSR is a significant disincentive to signing up for an ALEC's service. Indeed, customers have decided not to migrate to ALECs because BellSouth delayed too long and made it too difficult to switch carriers.⁴⁶ As an ALEC explained at the workshop, one of its customers has been waiting for over three months for BellSouth to remove the ADSL USOC code so that he can migrate his service.⁴⁷

Additionally, as noted above, BellSouth's CSRs often contain inaccurate information. Several customers contacted by ALECs after rejection of an order have told the ALEC that they had discontinued DSL service for some time prior to the migration, and did not understand why the USOC code was still on their CSR. BellSouth has acknowledged that it has failed to promptly remove the ADSL USOC code from the CSRs of customers that no longer used BellSouth DSL service. It has also acknowledged that the "process" given to ALECs for

⁴⁵ Delays occur regardless of whether the customer wants ADSL removed completely from the CSR, the customer does not have ADSL service to begin with, or the customer wants ADSL moved from one line to another.

⁴⁶ Tr. at 88.

⁴⁷ Tr. at 86.

requesting these changes does not work and may not even have been communicated to the internal BellSouth groups who perform this function. Since BellSouth has failed to take appropriate action, ALECs are left without a process for dealing with orders rejected by BellSouth for ADSL USOC code reasons. In fact, there is no relief on the immediate horizon.

2. Proposed Solutions

BellSouth should be required to permit ALECs to provide voice service to BellSouth customers using the same line used to provide BellSouth's FastAccess service. If this solution is implemented, the operational problems with BellSouth's implementation of its policy will become moot. If the Commission does not require BellSouth to change its policy, then at least the Commission should require BellSouth to (1) identify the DSL provider on the CSR;⁴⁸ (2) permit ALECs to act as the customer's agent so that the ALEC can modify the account; and (3) remove the ADSL the same business day, if at all possible, but in all cases within 24 hours of receipt of the removal request.

C. BellSouth Provides Invalid Clarifications (Priority 3)

1. The Problem

An invalid clarification occurs when BellSouth rejects a local service request even though it was completed properly by the ALEC according to the business rules. In January 2002, 30% of Network Telephone's overall clarifications fell into this category.⁴⁹ These invalid clarifications result in unnecessary processing expense for ALECs and delay for ALEC customers. Indeed, Network Telephone explained that its back office must spend hours -- and

⁴⁸ Until BellSouth provides ALECs the ability to view the DSL provider on the CSR, BellSouth should be required to provide ALECs same-day identification of the DSL provider.

⁴⁹ Tr. at 67.

sometimes days -- dealing with Fleming Island and the Birmingham LCSC to resolve these issues.⁵⁰ Network Telephone has more than once furnished several examples of invalid clarifications to BellSouth, but the problem persists.

AT&T has also been impacted by invalid clarifications. During October and November 2001, AT&T had 203 UNE-P orders, roughly 619 lines, impacted because of a USOC conversion. This caused these UNE-P orders to fall out and delayed AT&T's ability to migrate the customers.⁵¹

Invalid clarifications also can occur because of poorly trained BellSouth representatives in the LCSC. Nevertheless, BellSouth representatives have rejected orders on this basis. Manual handling must be reduced and when it is required, BellSouth representatives must be trained adequately so that correct ALEC orders are not rejected. Improper clarifications are an unnecessary, time consuming, and expensive burden on ALECs.

2. Proposed Solutions

ALECs recommend that this Commission address the problem of invalid clarifications by (1) requiring BellSouth to improve its error code descriptions to be sufficiently specific to allow for error identification and correction by the ALEC; (2) requiring BellSouth to improve its employee training; and (3) when the LSR is handled manually, requiring BellSouth representatives to review the entire LSR before returning any and all clarifications at once.

⁵⁰ Tr. at 66-67.

⁵¹ Tr. at 78.

D. BellSouth Places Local Freezes On Consumers' Lines And Fails To Remove Them Promptly (Priority 4)

1. The Problem

Local freezes function similarly to PC freezes to prevent a customer's local service from being migrated to another carrier.⁵² ALECs are discovering that their orders to migrate customers are being clarified or rejected because there is a local freeze listed on the customer's account. BellSouth has placed some of these freezes without the knowledge of the customer.⁵³ In other cases, the freeze is legitimate, but BellSouth fails to remove the freeze promptly upon the customer's request.⁵⁴ In either case, the freeze prevents the customer from migrating his service.

Customers wishing to migrate have called and written BellSouth to lift local freezes, but to no avail. After the customers request the freeze be lifted, resubmitted ALEC LSRs are repeatedly rejected or clarified because of account freezes. In some cases, customers report that BellSouth informed them that the freeze was lifted or BellSouth even provided an order confirmation number, but the resubmitted ALEC LSR is still rejected due to an account freeze. There have been cases where this cycle of rejected LSRs has gone on for months despite the customer's repeated calls to BellSouth and BellSouth's repeated representations that the freeze has been lifted. Notwithstanding any explanation from BellSouth of the specific root causes of the problem, the end results are the same: BellSouth has not lifted local freezes as requested by the customer and required by FCC rules, and the ALECs' LSRs are needlessly

⁵² Tr. at 88.

⁵³ Tr. at 89.

⁵⁴ Tr. at 81.

delayed by that failure. The irony of the situation should not escape the Commission: an account freeze the customer may have wanted as additional protection against slamming can result in a “reverse slam” by BellSouth’s failure properly to lift the freeze and allow the customer to migrate when he or she chooses. BellSouth’s anti-competitive behavior causes significant delay in providing the customer the ALEC service he desires, costs the ALEC time, and increases ALEC expense.

2. Proposed Solution

To remedy this problem, ALECs suggest that this Commission require BellSouth to lift the local freeze within 1 business day and issue both a provisioning and completion notice within 24 hours.

E. BellSouth Provides Incomplete Clarifications (Priority 5)

1. The Problem

When ALEC orders must be processed manually, BellSouth often provides incomplete manual clarifications, which means that the clarification BellSouth returns to an ALEC does not address all errors found on the LSR. Accordingly, subsequent LSRs submitted by the ALEC can be rejected based on reasons that existed in the original LSR. This serial approach to clarifications leads to delayed implementation for ALEC customers and increases ALECs’ operating expenses.

2. Proposed Solution

To resolve this problem, the Commission should require BellSouth to implement a process to ensure that the entire LSR is validated during the first order review. In this manner, all clarifications can be returned to the ALEC at the same time. The process will allow

customers to get their service sooner as well as save both BellSouth and ALECs significant time and energy that would otherwise be devoted to correcting LSRs on an error-by-error basis.

F. BellSouth's LCSC Escalation Process Must Be Improved (Priority 6)

1. The Problem

When ALECs have a question about a pending order, provisioning problem, or other issue, they must contact BellSouth's LCSC. What ALECs encounter is a labyrinthine system in which the ALEC is passed from person to person, up BellSouth's escalation chain. As the Commission noted, the very first person with whom an ALEC speaks, the BellSouth service representative, does not have any authority to address ALECs' concerns immediately.⁵⁵ Accordingly, ALECs almost always have to escalate problems to effect some kind of resolution. This increases ALECs' cost since the ALEC must send in additional orders,⁵⁶ and delays resolution of the problem. Indeed, it can take hours to solve a relatively simple problem.

2. Proposed Solutions

BellSouth should follow this Commission's directive to empower its line employees to resolve problems. Additionally, BellSouth should provide the Commission and ALECs with its current internal methods and procedures including targets for responding to escalations, and BellSouth's action plans to decrease escalation response times.

⁵⁵ Tr. at 173-74.

⁵⁶ Tr. at 174.

G. BellSouth Returns Incomplete FOCs (Priority 7)

1. The Problem

BellSouth frequently returns firm order confirmations (“FOCs”) without the requisite service order identifier.⁵⁷ While this permits the order to proceed initially, the lack of an order ID prevents ALEC/BellSouth coordination in the provisioning stage. When an ALEC is competing via UNE-Loop, for example, a great deal of coordination is involved in order to prevent unnecessary end user outages. Since the BellSouth service centers rely almost exclusively on the service order ID for tracking and processing orders, they will not communicate with ALECs that do not have the corresponding order ID. Coordination is therefore impossible, and delays and customer outages are inevitable.

2. Proposed Solutions

Since a timely but incomplete FOC is useless, the Commission must ensure that BellSouth is not sacrificing completeness for the sake of timeliness. While ALECs have attempted temporary workarounds,⁵⁸ BellSouth personnel have failed to take ownership of the issue and it continues to unnecessarily hinder local competition. BellSouth should be required to identify the root cause of this problem, and submit a remediation plan to the Commission for approval. The performance metrics also must exclude all FOCs sent without a service order ID from the count of FOCs sent on time, in order to create an incentive for BellSouth to ensure that its FOCs are complete when sent.

⁵⁷ Tr. at 179.

⁵⁸ *Id.*

H. BellSouth's Due Date Calculator "Fix" Must Be Validated (Priority 8)

1. The Problems

BellSouth must demonstrate to this Commission and ALECs that it has remedied the consistently recurring problems ALECs have with obtaining accurate due dates. Equivalent access to due dates is critical to competition because ALEC customers, like BellSouth customers, expect the ALEC to be able to tell them the date on which service will be installed while they are on the line. Recognizing the importance of the due date functionality, the FCC stated in its *Second Louisiana Order* that it would "closely examine BellSouth's automatic due date calculation capability in any future application."⁵⁹ While BellSouth asserts that it has recently implemented software enhancements that would remedy problems with its due date calculator, ALECs and this Commission have reason to be skeptical of this yet unproven "fix." Indeed, two previous attempts undertaken by BellSouth to fix problems with its due date calculator were unsuccessful.

Moreover, BellSouth's fix only addresses the problem of incorrect due dates on the Supp 3 transaction. The due date problem exists on each supplemental order an ALEC submits. For example, an ALEC may submit an order to migrate a customer with a due date of 5/1/02. The initial order will be confirmed with this due date via the FOC. Prior to the completion of the order, the ALEC may issue a supplemental order (supp 2) to move the due date to 5/10/02. BellSouth's systems return the initial due date (5/1) on the FOC rather than the new due date,

⁵⁹ Memorandum Opinion and Order, *In the Matter of Application by BellSouth Corporation, et al., Pursuant to Section 271 of the Communications Act of 1934 as Amended to Provide In-Region, InterLATA Services in Louisiana*, 13 FCC Rcd. 20,599 ¶¶ 104-06 (F.C.C. Oct. 13, 1998) (No. CC 98-121, FCC 98-271) ("*Second Louisiana Order*").

even though the order will be completed on 5/10. BellSouth has not explained why this problem is occurring or why they can only fix this problem for the *third* supplemental order that ALECs issue for this same account. No due date has been established for this fix.

2. Proposed Solutions

This Commission should require KCI to evaluate BellSouth's latest "fix" using substantial commercial usage data. Additionally, the Commission should require BellSouth to expand its due date calculator "fix" to include Supp 2s and to provide a root cause analysis of this problem. Until BellSouth can demonstrate it has comprehensively corrected its due date calculator, it cannot be relied upon.

I. BellSouth's Ordering Systems Experience Frequent Outages (Priority 9)

1. The Problem

ALECs are dependant upon BellSouth's EDI, LENS, and TAG systems to place their orders. When these systems are slow, or when the systems experience outages, ALECs' ability to order products and services from BellSouth is severely limited. BellSouth systems experience an unacceptable number of service outages. In January 2002, for example, EDI experienced 2 outages, which lasted between 40 minutes to 8 hours and 10 minutes.⁶⁰ That same month, LENS experienced 9 outages ranging from 20 minutes to 6 hours and 25 minutes, and TAG experienced 4 outages ranging from 5 minutes to 1 hour and 20 minutes. February 2002 data indicates BellSouth's outage problems continue and, for TAG, the problems are worse.⁶¹ Importantly, these outage reports do not include the first 20 minutes of an outage. Moreover, outages of less than 20 minutes are never reported.

⁶⁰ See System Outage Report available at www.interconnection.bellsouth.com/markets/lec/ccp

2. Proposed Solutions

To solve this problem, BellSouth should provide additional computer resources to ensure that these important ordering systems are available to ALECs. Additionally, BellSouth should begin reporting all outages, including those with less than 20 minutes, to allow ALECs and the Commission to monitor this area of performance. Finally, BellSouth should be required to discontinue its discriminatory OSS offerings by having down time for LENS and TAG be no more than that for EDI.

IV. BELLSOUTH'S PROVISIONING PROBLEMS HARM FLORIDA CONSUMERS AND ALECS

The area of provisioning affects customers most directly,⁶² and delays in provisioning ALEC orders causes intense customer dissatisfaction.⁶³ The February workshop identified a number of important customer-impacting provisioning problems. As ALECs explained,

- BellSouth's provisioning accuracy is poor;
- BellSouth prematurely disconnects ALEC customers migrating to UNE-P and UNE-Loop;
- BellSouth issues an excessive number of pending facility holds on ALEC orders and does not promptly resolve those holds;
- BellSouth's jeopardy notice procedures are inadequate;
- BellSouth improperly rejects disconnect orders;
- BellSouth fails to provide timely provisioning of UCL-ND;

(Footnote cont'd from previous page.)

⁶¹ The February Service Outage Report indicates TAG experienced 10 outages.

⁶² Tr. at 161.

⁶³ Indeed, the only way ALECs become aware of provisioning problems is through customer complaints or via random audits. Tr. at 163.

- BellSouth fails to satisfy its obligations for line sharing; and
- BellSouth fails to follow procedures in provisioning ALEC line sharing orders.

ALECs are powerless to correct any of these provisioning issues independently. Only BellSouth and this Commission can ensure that these processes function properly.

A. BellSouth's Provisioning Accuracy is Poor (Priority 1)

1. The Problems

BellSouth impedes ALECs' ability to compete in Florida by failing to provision ALECs' customers accurately. This problem is so acute that for some loops ALEC customers experience provisioning troubles at a rate seven times higher than the rate for BellSouth's own customers.⁶⁴

Other problems include:

- MCI customers who received the wrong interLATA carrier, received the wrong features, or did not receive important features⁶⁵;
- ALEC customers who incurred substantial telephone costs they did not expect;
- ALEC customers experiencing provisioning problems for ISDN lines within the first 30 days of provisioning at a rate twice as high as the rate for BellSouth customers.

Remedying BellSouth's inaccurate provisioning wastes valuable ALEC resources. These are problems that take significant time to resolve. Indeed, MCI told the Commission that "these are the most disconcerting customer problems of all, and they are problems that require us to

⁶⁴ ALEC line sharing customers were impacted most significantly. 66.67% of ALECs' line sharing customers experienced provisioning troubles within the first 30 days of provisioning. In contrast, only 9.4% of BellSouth's customers were similarly impacted.

⁶⁵ Tr. at 162.

make multiple calls to BellSouth.”⁶⁶ As the Commission noted, BellSouth’s errors also cause ALECs added expense. When BellSouth provides ALECs an incorrect service order confirmation, the ALEC only learns of the incorrect provisioning when the customer calls to complain,⁶⁷ a step that often occurs only after the customer has been billed for a service that her or she is not receiving. Further complicating matters is the fact that ALECs do not automatically receive a refund from BellSouth for the period of time in which the service was not operational.⁶⁸

BellSouth’s provisioning accuracy problems extend to ALEC business customers. When converting ALEC customers to UNE-P, BellSouth sometimes implements the wrong translations causing these business customers to experience service disruptions, incorrect service provisioning, and incorrect bills.⁶⁹ ITC customers, for example, have lost service and voice mail features, have had their hunting service disrupted and have had their inside wire and jacks not applied according to the order. To assure that its customer’s are receiving the services as ordered, ITC reviews all completed CSRs and sends to BellSouth a list of discrepancies each week for correction. ALEC customers should not be subjected to such deterioration in service.

This is a known deficiency in BellSouth’s OSS. On October 10, 2001, KCI opened Exception 112 because BellSouth’s systems or representatives have not consistently provisioned services and features as specified in orders submitted by KCI.

⁶⁶ Tr. at 163.

⁶⁷ Tr. at 163.

⁶⁸ Tr. at 164.

⁶⁹ Tr. at 186.

2. Proposed Solutions

BellSouth must conduct a root cause analysis and fix this issue quickly and effectively. With additional flow through capabilities, implementation of Single C, improved service order accuracy measures, and sampling/verifications of completed customer service records by BellSouth, quality of service should improve significantly.

B. BellSouth Prematurely Disconnects ALEC Customers Migrating To UNE-P and UNE-Loop (Priority 2)

1. The Problem

When a customer converts from BellSouth's service to UNE-P, the conversion *should* have no impact on the end-user's service.⁷⁰ The evidence presented at the workshop demonstrates, however, that BellSouth's current migration process is not working properly and results in an unduly high number of incidents of loss of service.⁷¹ BellSouth's role in causing the loss of service is hidden from the consumer, leaving the ALEC to incur the customer's wrath and suffer damage to its business reputation.

The premature disconnect problems arise because BellSouth uses two separate internal orders to convert customers to UNE-P: a new or "N" order accomplishes the conversion to UNE-P; a disconnect or "D" order disconnects the customer's service from BellSouth. If BellSouth does not process these two orders in the proper sequence, the customer's service is disconnected *before* the conversion to the new service is complete.⁷²

⁷⁰ Tr. at 186.

⁷¹ Tr. at 182-84

⁷² Tr. at 183.

Unfortunately, this problem is not limited to UNE-P orders, as BellSouth consistently fails to coordinate the D (disconnect) and N (new/reconnect) portions of ALEC UNE-Loop orders as well.⁷³ When this occurs, end users suffer from a variety of out of service conditions, depending on which order is worked and in what sequence. When the D order is worked, for example, but the corresponding N order is not, the end user will be completely out of service;⁷⁴ when the situation is reversed, end users will generally lose all incoming service since inbound calls will be ported to a circuit other than the one still connected to the customer.

BellSouth is proposing a new single C order that allegedly will remedy this problem. Currently, the target implementation date for the single C order is April 2002.⁷⁵ ALECs have no assurance that this process will correct the problem. As AT&T witness Berger explained, several months ago BellSouth had implemented an “interim fix” for this premature disconnect problem.⁷⁶ This temporary solution, however, did not correct the problem and ALEC customers continue to lose service when migrating to UNE-P.⁷⁷ Indeed, when this Commission asked if BellSouth’s single C process would correct the flaws of BellSouth’s interim measure, BellSouth could not give this Commission or ALECs that assurance.⁷⁸

⁷³ Tr. at 182-183.

⁷⁴ Tr. at 183.

⁷⁵ Tr. at 183-84.

⁷⁶ Tr. at 184.

⁷⁷ Tr. at 184.

⁷⁸ Tr. at 204-05

2. Proposed Solution

Implementing a single C order is the first step toward correcting this important customer-impacting problem. Whether the single C order will correct this customer-impacting deficiency is uncertain. This Commission should monitor its implementation to determine whether a single C order allows seamless, transparent UNE-P conversions. If for some reason the single C order does not correct this problem, this Commission should require BellSouth to conduct a root cause analysis to identify and resolve this issue. Since the single C practice will apparently not apply to UNE-Loop conversions, the Commission must initiate a process whereby it, BellSouth and the ALECs work out an analogous practice to ensure that disconnect and reconnect orders are tied firmly to one another and get worked in the proper sequence. Absent a procedure that eliminates loss of service during the customer migration, ALECs and Florida consumers will continue to experience an unduly high incidence of lost service when migrating customers to UNE-P or to UNE-Loops.

C. BellSouth Issues An Excessive Number Of Pending Facilities Holds And Does Not Promptly Resolve Those Holds (Priority 3)

1. The Problems

The pending facility problem ALECs described to this Commission is twofold,⁷⁹ and is the highest priority issue for facilities-based ALECs. First, BellSouth places an excessive number of ALEC orders on hold, pending facilities ("PF hold"), based either on an actual or perceived lack of facilities. In some instances, BellSouth's belief that it lacks facilities is colored by inaccurate record keeping – its records simply fail to enable a reliable assessment of whether

⁷⁹ Tr. at 181-82.

it has facilities available for a certain order. The larger problem, however, is that BellSouth is treating ALECs in a discriminatory manner when it comes to assignment of available facilities.⁸⁰

BellSouth's own data reveals the severity of the discrimination problem, and clearly reveals that BellSouth places a far greater percentage of ALEC orders in PF hold, for many service categories. The January 2002 data demonstrates, for example, that 8.4% of ALEC orders for 2 wire analog loop-designed were placed in jeopardy compared to just 0.6% of BellSouth orders for the same product. Likewise, 9.6% of ALEC orders for 2 wire analog loops with LNP were placed in jeopardy, while again only 0.6% of BellSouth's orders received a jeopardy notice. For digital loops greater than DS1, BellSouth placed *over half* (56%) of ALEC orders in jeopardy as compared to just 5% of its own orders. Placing ten times as many ALEC orders in PF jeopardy status is clear evidence of discrimination.

The second problem ALECs encounter is that once BellSouth places its order in a PF hold, BellSouth unduly delays solving the problem. Accordingly, the ALEC, and its customer must wait for BellSouth to decide to provision these pending orders. BellSouth has admitted in the Georgia performance measures docket that it has delayed resolving certain ALEC orders that were in pending facilities status.⁸¹ BellSouth has indicated that it is in the process of developing additional procedures to ensure prompt resolution of pending facilities situations by field personnel. Whether these procedures will correct this problem, however, remains far from clear.

⁸⁰ Tr. at 182.

⁸¹ BellSouth Telecommunications, Inc.'s Third Notice of Filing Corrective Action Plan, *In re: Performance Measurements for Telecommunications Interconnection Unbundling and Resale*, filed Feb. 1, 2002 in Docket No. 7892-U at 14-15.

2. Proposed Solutions

To address these pending facilities deficiencies, the Commission must require that BellSouth provide access to facilities on a nondiscriminatory basis. BellSouth must develop a remedial action plan to provide equal access to facilities as the Act requires,⁸² and submit performance data that proves it is providing such access. The Commission must also require that BellSouth consult accurate facility records prior to advising ALECs whether it has facilities available. This must be done prior to issuance of the firm order confirmation. If the current FOC interval is not sufficient as it relates to loop orders (specifically DS-1 and above), consideration should be given to the establishment of a separate interval for those orders.⁸³ A timely but unreliable FOC is of no utility, and actually harms competition by setting false expectations. Finally, the loop provisioning process must contain a procedure to actually verify the existence of a working loop prior to the time scheduled for the install or cut-over.⁸⁴

In order to speed resolution of PF holds, this Commission should require BellSouth to implement its Georgia corrective action plan in Florida and should require BellSouth to develop a comprehensive and systematic procedure to update its field records.

D. BellSouth's Jeopardy Notice Procedures Are Inadequate (Priority 4)

1. The Problems

BellSouth's procedure for managing jeopardy notices is inadequate in several important respects. BellSouth issues jeopardy notices late – sometimes on the day the conversion is

⁸² 47 U.S.C. §§ 251(c)(3) and 271(c)(2)(B)(ii) and (iv); *See also* 47 U.S.C. §§251(d)(2) and (d)(3).

⁸³ Tr. at 182.

⁸⁴ Tr. at 187-188.

scheduled to occur.⁸⁵ This last minute jeopardy notice disrupts both the customer's and ALEC's plans. If BellSouth will not be able to meet a due date, ALECs need to know that fact in advance of the due date so that they can advise their customer that the service might not be installed as originally scheduled and make alternative arrangements.

Additionally, the manner in which BellSouth informs ALECs of these last minute jeopardies compounds the problem. AT&T, for example, provides appropriate contact information including a representative's name, telephone number, and facsimile number on the orders it submits to BellSouth. When BellSouth returns jeopardy notices, it does so by facsimile, regardless of whether the order is placed electronically or manually. While this factor alone unnecessarily introduces delay into BellSouth's notification process, the problem is exacerbated by BellSouth attempting to send the notice to an out-of-service-fax number or to AT&T's representative's voice number.

2. Proposed Solutions

ALECs propose that these provisioning problems be corrected by requiring BellSouth to return electronic jeopardy notices for electronically submitted LSRs. The loop provisioning process must also verify the existence of a working loop prior to the time scheduled for the install or cut-over.⁸⁶ Finally, BellSouth should be required to report in PMAP all jeopardy notices issued on due date so that ALECs and the Commission can monitor this problem.

⁸⁵ Tr. at 187.

⁸⁶ Tr. at 187-188.

E. BellSouth Improperly Rejects Disconnect Orders (Priority 5)

1. The Problem

Another provisioning problem that ALECs experience concerns BellSouth's rejection of disconnect orders.⁸⁷ As the ALEC community explained, the essence of this issue is that an ALEC submits its request for a particular circuit ID to be disconnected and BellSouth rejects that request stating the circuit identified is invalid. Prior to issuing the disconnect order, however, the ALEC validated the circuit through BellSouth's back office system COSMOS.⁸⁸ Accordingly, the ALEC has already validated the circuit ID to be disconnected.

In order to overcome these improper rejections, ALECs must use time consuming work-arounds that involve multiple telephone calls with BellSouth's LCSC. This causes ALECs to experience significant delay and added expense, and delays the availability of these facilities for subsequent orders.

2. Proposed Solution

Since BellSouth representatives acknowledge that these orders are being rejected in error,⁸⁹ the solution is simple: determine why the system is rejecting valid orders, and implement a system fix. Perhaps there is a conflict between BellSouth's order system and its COSMOS system. BellSouth must perform a root cause analysis, identify the problem, and submit a fix for the Commission's and ALECs' approval.

⁸⁷ Tr. at 180.

⁸⁸ Tr. at 180.

⁸⁹ Tr. at 181.

F. BellSouth Fails to Provide Timely Provisioning of UCL-ND (Priority 6)

1. The Problem

ALECs continue to experience problems getting BellSouth personnel to follow the BellSouth procedure for provisioning UCL-ND loops. BellSouth's process for provisioning the UCL-ND loop provides that, if the loop requires a dispatch, the BellSouth technician will provision the loop, call the ALEC to close the order and provide demarcation point information so that the ALEC technician can identify the loop. BellSouth is not following this process.

2. Proposed Solution

The Commission should require BellSouth to:

- Identify who is responsible for ensuring that BellSouth follows established procedures for provisioning UCL-ND loops;
- Assign ownership for process failures;
- Create a quality management group to whom these types of issue may be escalated immediately; and
- Come to immediate resolution of these problems.

G. BellSouth Fails to Satisfy Its Obligations for Line Sharing (Priority 7)

1. The Problem

The workshop made clear that BellSouth is not satisfying its contractual obligations to provide line sharing. Under the terms of the contract, BellSouth is required to provision Covad's line sharing orders within three days.⁹⁰ BellSouth's Products and Services Interval Guide also

⁹⁰ Tr. at 169.

offers three business days as its standard provisioning interval for line sharing.⁹¹ Yet, BellSouth fails to meet its offered interval or its contractual obligation for this important service.

2. Proposed Solution

The solution to this problem is a simple one -- BellSouth must honor its contractual obligation to provision loops within its standard interval and the interval imposed by contract.

H. **BellSouth Fails To Follow Procedures In Provisioning ALEC Line Sharing Orders (Priority 8)**

1. The Problems

BellSouth's failure to follow its own process to provide ALECs with line sharing has severely impacted ALEC-customer relations. As Covad has explained, BellSouth central office technicians are required to test line sharing orders for load coils before closing the order. If the technician discovers a load coil on the loop, BellSouth is supposed to place the order in jeopardy and await further instructions from the ALEC regarding whether the load coil should be removed.⁹²

BellSouth does not consistently follow this procedure. This failure introduces needless delay in the provisioning process because ALECs must open a trouble ticket to determine why the loop it ordered does not work. Meanwhile, the customer expects his service to be working. Until BellSouth removes the impediment on the loop, ALECs cannot provide the service. These delays seriously impact the ALEC's credibility with the customer, and lead the customer to believe the ALEC is inefficient.

⁹¹ BellSouth Products and Services Interval Guide, Issue 5A at 44.

⁹² *Id.*

This is not the only line sharing related provisioning problem ALECs experience. As Covad detailed, in November 2001, 36% of its line sharing orders had troubles within the first 30 days.⁹³ Of those, 30% experienced repeat troubles.⁹⁴ Further, BellSouth missed 18% of scheduled repair appointments. This pattern of poor provisioning and repair is visited upon the ALEC in terms of customer dissatisfaction.

2. Proposed Solution

BellSouth should follow its procedure and test for load coils before closing a line sharing order.

V. BELLSOUTH'S BILLING POLICIES MUST BE IMPROVED

ALECs must receive wholesale bills that they can audit and validate and must receive accurate usage records that enable them to bill their own end user customers. WorldCom's MCI business unit has experienced a number of billing problems in connections with its roll out of local residential service in Georgia and Florida, including the following:

- Orders are delayed pending billing completion;
- Formatting and other errors in wholesale bills;
- Billing usage data to the wrong billing account number ("BAN"); and
- Lack of an "outcollection process" for the return of incomplete records.

A. Orders Are Delayed Pending Billing Completion (Priority 1)

1. The Problem

⁹³ Tr. at 169.

⁹⁴ *Id.*

When an order is “pending billing completion,” an ALEC cannot make modifications to the order or report trouble for the customer. The current internal process for correcting these errors is manual and requires up to 30 days.

2. Proposed Solution

BellSouth should provide a weekly report of orders held in billing and a metric should be developed for curing this problem. BellSouth should synch up its databases to ensure that these billing errors do not occur. Further, BellSouth should provide a billing completion notice, which would inform ALECs of when their orders had cleared BellSouth’s billing systems.

B. BellSouth has Formatting and Other Errors in Its Wholesale Bills (Priority 2)

1. The Problem

MCI has had significant problems with auditing its wholesale bills due to formatting and other errors. Without correctly formatted bills, MCI cannot audit the information that BellSouth provides to determine whether charges are being correctly assessed. MCI cannot simply “assume” that charges are correct but – like any business – must be able to ensure that the bill matches the circuits and features provided to our end user customers.

MCI’s audit of the January UNE-P bills it received in Georgia showed that 3% of the lines for which MCI was billed did not include a billing telephone number (“BTN”). (The bills included only the area codes instead of the complete BTNs for these numbers.) The BTN is the only information on the bill that identifies the customer to whom the charge or credit is supposed to relate. Without a BTN, therefore, MCI cannot even determine whether the charge or credit relates to a bill for a legitimate MCI customer, much less compare the charge or credit against the amount MCI expects to receive for a particular customer.

This is a longstanding problem. MCI called BellSouth many months ago to protest the missing BTNs on the bill. BellSouth did not look into the issue. Instead, BellSouth informed MCI that if MCI did not pay its bills as a result of this issue, BellSouth would cut off MCI's service. MCI therefore paid the bulk of the bills. MCI has continued to raise the issue, yet BellSouth still has not fixed the problem. Instead, BellSouth initially asserted that it had no obligation to provide the BTNs that are missing. Now BellSouth seems to acknowledge that it should be sending the BTNs, but in recent weeks BellSouth has begun asserting that it is sending the BTNs. BellSouth has indicated to MCI that there is a way to extract the BTNs from the data it sends because the BTNs are in a left-hand Feature Identifier ("FID"). MCI hopes that BellSouth is correct and that BellSouth will soon explain how MCI can obtain the data. If MCI cannot do so, it will continue to have a substantial problem with auditing its bills. MCI's ability to audit its bills is particularly important because it appears likely those bills are inaccurate.

2. Proposed Solution

BellSouth should be required to fix its billing process so that BTNs are not excluded from its wholesale bills.

C. BellSouth Bills Usage Data to the Wrong BAN (Priority 3)

1. The Problem

BellSouth continues to bill usage against the wrong BAN. MCI has two UNE-P BANs in Georgia, one for customers around Atlanta, one for the rest of the state. As of January 2002, 23% of the ANIs in Georgia were billing under the wrong BAN. This makes it more difficult to maintain records and track.

2. Proposed Solution

BellSouth should be required to fix its billing process so that usage data is billed to the correct BAN.

D. BellSouth Fails to Provide an Outcollection Process (Priority 4)

1. The Problem

One key request MCI made to the BellSouth account team was that BellSouth establish an "outcollect process." With such a process, MCI would return incorrect records to BellSouth which would then have all of the records and could more easily research the underlying problems. For example, MCI would like to be able to return to BellSouth the thousand of records BellSouth has transmitted for improperly routed intraLATA calls. This would be an easy way for BellSouth to provide credits for the DUF charges on such records. It would also enable BellSouth to more effectively investigate MCI's claim. BellSouth responded that it would take more than \$30,000 to provide MCI an estimate of how much it would cost to provide an outcollect process even though BellSouth invented the process in the interLATA context for 800 number portability. Other BOCs such as Verizon and SWBT have established an outcollect process for free since this process benefits both entities.

2. Proposed Solution

BellSouth should develop an outcollection process at no charge to ALECs.

VI. BELLSOUTH'S MAINTENANCE AND REPAIR PRACTICES MUST BE IMPROVED

The workshop revealed that BellSouth's maintenance and repair practices are inadequate. ALECs are experiencing a high incidence of loss of dial tone, chronic repair troubles, premature closing of trouble tickets, failure to perform repairs during customer business hours, and a high rate of new installation failures. ALECs also explained that BellSouth does not call ALECs once a repair is complete. Finally, the timeliness of BellSouth's maintenance is also an issue. Indeed, Network Telephone demonstrated that, according to its own data, BellSouth takes over three

times longer to resolve UNE-P outages than to resolve UNE L outages for which BellSouth is responsible. These problems all degrade ALECs' ability to provide quality, reliable service to Florida customers. Continued problems in this domain threaten ALECs' ability to compete effectively in Florida.

A. Loss of Dial Tone (Priority 1)

1. The Problem

The consensus within the ALEC community is that the most significant maintenance and repair issue facing ALECs in Florida is the loss of dial tone.⁹⁵ When customers lose dial tone and cannot get their service restored promptly, they become angry and frustrated with the ALEC provider. ALECs, however, are not the source of the problem. Indeed, the workshop made clear that the majority of the loss of dial tone problems are caused by BellSouth repair issues.⁹⁶

Network Telephone, for example, explained that in December 2001, it experienced 245 total outages. Over half of these outages were caused by BellSouth.⁹⁷ Florida Digital also explained that BellSouth technicians cause dial tone loss. The problem arises because BellSouth's technicians pull the jumpers for Florida Digital's customers in the field.⁹⁸ Once the jumper is pulled, the customer's service goes down. The ALECs in most cases are able to perform line diagnostics that aid in pinpointing where the problem lies. In these situations it is determined to be a BellSouth issue. The trouble is called in to BellSouth and usually resolved. However, the tickets are typically closed to no trouble found or customer premises equipment

⁹⁵ Tr. 268.

⁹⁶ Tr. at 269-70.

⁹⁷ Tr. at 270.

⁹⁸ Tr. at 269.

issues. Both of these closure codes exclude the problem from the “trouble within 30 days” metric.

At the workshop, AT&T provided a list of 19 PONs, representing customers who had experienced service difficulty as a result of the UNE-P conversion from BellSouth. These customers either lost dial tone or lost features due to one of four reasons: 1) BellSouth processed the “D” order without processing an associated “N” order; 2) mistakes were made by the BellSouth LCSC agent when the orders were being retyped in the BellSouth systems; 3) BellSouth technicians did not implement the service as was indicated on the order; or 4) BellSouth changed the facilities on which the customer’s service was riding. BellSouth dismissed these examples of provisioning problems, stating that AT&T’s data was flawed. On March 1, 2002, AT&T met with BellSouth to review these PONs as instructed by the FL PSC. At that meeting, BellSouth admitted AT&T’s data was in fact correct and that BellSouth had caused the majority of the customer problems. Of the 19 PONs, the problems on 15 were indeed caused by the BellSouth LCSC. On an additional three PONs, BellSouth indicated that they found no problems caused by the LCSC. However, AT&T’s original spreadsheet indicated these were technician errors or change of facilities. AT&T has requested that BellSouth look into these problems again. BellSouth could not find the final PON.

2. Proposed Solution

To resolve this important issue, BellSouth must adequately map and tag its facilities so that ALEC jumpers are not pulled in error. Until BellSouth improves its performance in this area, ALECs should not be required to pay tagging charges on new orders. Additionally, BellSouth technicians must test the numbers before removing jumpers. If BellSouth finds that

there is a customer on a tested line, BellSouth should be required to contact the ALEC to resolve the issue before any additional work is performed on the order.

B. ALECs Experience Chronic Repair Troubles (Priority 2)

1. The Problem

Another important area that affects ALECs is that BellSouth does not properly repair a trouble the first time a trouble ticket is issued.⁹⁹ This leads to a high number of chronic repair problems. ALECs experience an extraordinarily high rate of repeat troubles on IDSL loops.¹⁰⁰ Investigation into the trouble tickets that result in repeat repairs has revealed that many are closed prematurely as “No Trouble Found.” Once a trouble ticket is labeled “No Trouble Found,” no additional work is done by BellSouth to isolate and resolve troubles. As a result, ALECs must open additional trouble tickets to get a problem resolved that should have been resolved when the first trouble ticket was opened. The only way to give BellSouth the proper incentive to isolate and resolve trouble tickets on the first ticket is by imposing penalties when multiple tickets have to be opened.

BellSouth’s own data reveals the magnitude of the problem. In November, 2001, for example, one out of every five two-wire analog loop design troubles that required a dispatch was a repeat trouble from the preceding 30 days.¹⁰¹ BellSouth’s across-the-board performance for various loop types is, in fact, equally disconcerting, with almost all loop types falling in the 15-30% repeat trouble range.¹⁰²

⁹⁹ Tr. at 267.

¹⁰⁰ Covad, for instance, has a 30% rate of troubles that BellSouth has reported closed recurring within thirty days.

¹⁰¹ Metric B.3.4.8.1.

¹⁰² Monthly State Summary, Metric B.3.4.

While the faulty repair issue is clearly one part of the problem, BellSouth's discriminatory assignment of facilities referenced above is likely a contributing factor. BellSouth, it appears, may be assigning loop facilities to ALECs that it knows to be trouble-prone.¹⁰³ As a result, even when loop troubles are repaired, the problem is more likely to reappear than it would be on a circuit that BellSouth assigns for its own use.

2. Proposed Solutions

BellSouth should contact the ALEC prior to closing the trouble ticket. For xDSL orders, BellSouth must adhere to its stated process and allow joint acceptance testing of the loop before closing the trouble ticket. When BellSouth closes a trouble ticket based on "No Trouble Found," BellSouth should be responsible for tracking the ticket. Indeed, BellSouth should assume responsibility for the problem if subsequent troubles indicate that there was a BellSouth problem that was undetected at the time of the initial trouble ticket. In such an instance, BellSouth should credit the charges on the trouble tickets to the affected ALEC. This procedure will provide BellSouth an incentive to resolve the trouble when the first ticket is opened.

On a more general note, the Commission must ensure that BellSouth ceases its discriminatory loop facility assignment practices by requiring a detailed remediation program, employee training, performance measures and remedies for noncompliance. This will help dissipate the problem by preventing the routine assignment of second-rate loops to ALECs. The Commission should also order BellSouth to switch ALEC facilities following the second circuit outage in a given period of time (with ALEC concurrence, of course). This will help to remove

¹⁰³ See, for example, Track A Hearing Transcript at pages 1404, 1408.

faulty circuits from service, and will also help BellSouth attain checklist compliance by reducing the number of repeat outages on ALEC circuits.

C. BellSouth Inaccurately Reports “No Trouble Found” (Priority 3)

1. The Problem

The maintenance and repair reports BellSouth provides to ALECs are inaccurate. As ALECs explained, BellSouth technicians are closing trouble tickets as “No Trouble Found” even when there was a problem detected and corrected. For example, in connection with the loss of dial tone problem, an ALEC will issue a trouble ticket, a BellSouth technician will be dispatched and discover that the ALEC’s service is down because the jumper had been pulled. The technician will put the jumpers back in place, but close the trouble ticket as “No Trouble Found.” Network Telephone reports a recent case where, despite the pleas of Network Telephone’s Repair Supervisor for extraordinary effort to fix a customer with an out-of-service condition and his request for a call-back, BellSouth closed six consecutive tickets for this same customer to “No trouble found” without so much as a word to either the customer or Network Telephone personnel. Only days later was it discovered that this out-of-service condition was caused by a BellSouth central office problem. This practice of closing trouble tickets prematurely is epidemic among BellSouth’s field forces and grossly overstates BellSouth’s performance and masks BellSouth’s faulty maintenance procedures. Accordingly, ALEC customers continue to be taken out of service by BellSouth technicians.

2. Proposed Solution

To solve this problem, BellSouth must contact and get concurrence from the ALECs before a ticket can be closed out. Additionally, at the closing of the ticket an automatic dispute process should be available that would force BellSouth to track “No Trouble Finds” that are disputed by ALECs.

D. BellSouth Prematurely Closes Trouble Tickets (Priority 4)

1. The Problem

Closely related to the chronic troubles problem is that BellSouth's maintenance technicians are closing out repair tickets before calling the ALEC to ensure that the customer is actually back in service or that the problem is repaired.¹⁰⁴ Without confirmation from the ALECs that the trouble is repaired to the customer's satisfaction, BellSouth technicians cannot assess whether the problem has been resolved.

2. Proposed Solution

The BellSouth technician should be required to record with whom he spoke to close the trouble ticket. If the technician did not receive an answer, he should record in the trouble ticket log the date, time and phone number called. Additionally, the technicians should record whether the ALEC approved the trouble ticket closure. KCI should audit this information in the trouble ticket logs.

E. BellSouth Attempts to Make Repairs Outside Of Customer's Business Hours (Priority 5)

1. The Problem

ALECs also encounter repair problems because BellSouth's maintenance technicians will go to the customer's premises after hours to fix a problem without making arrangements to have after-hours access when such access is necessary to resolve the problem, e.g. the demarcation point is inside the premises. AT&T, for example, specifies on its orders that access is only available during regular business hours. BellSouth, however, disregards these comments. Accordingly, the technician cannot gain access to the premises and either codes the trouble ticket

¹⁰⁴ Tr. at 271.

as “no access” or closes out the trouble ticket. This causes customer dissatisfaction and undue delay in repairing the problem.

2. Proposed Solution

BellSouth should be required to train its technicians and discipline any employee who assigns a “no access” code to a trouble when the time noted on log is outside the customer’s business hours and no other arrangements have been noted on the trouble ticket. Moreover, BellSouth should be required to provide to the Commission and ALECs the audit procedures (and results) it uses to ensure trouble tickets are processed and coded correctly.¹⁰⁵

F. BellSouth’s Maintenance Average Duration Demonstrates ALECs Receive Disparate Treatment (Priority 6)

1. The Problem

Network Telephone has developed a sophisticated in-house tracking system for all its customer repair problems. Data from that system was provided at the February 18 Workshop, which revealed that BellSouth takes three times as long to fix troubles for Network Telephone customers that are the fault of BellSouth. Actual data reveals that NTC had a total of 488 trouble tickets in December attributable to BellSouth as the causal agent, each taking an average of 31.33 hours to fix. (NTC had 279 total tickets in the same time frame, and they took only an average of 11.78 hours to fix.)

2. Proposed Solution

To solve this problem, BellSouth must contact ALECs to receive concurrence before closing out a trouble ticket. In this manner, both the ALEC and BellSouth should report the same time frame for end-user resolve.

¹⁰⁵ This information could be supplied subject appropriate confidentiality agreements.

G. ALECs Experience An Excessive Number of New Install Failures (Priority 7)

1. The Problem

BellSouth is failing to install loops for ALECs on par with its own provisioning. Once again, this problem may be connected with BellSouth's discriminatory loop assignment procedures, which it assigns second-rate loops to ALECs, or it may simply be BellSouth technicians failing to exercise the same degree of care with ALEC loops that they use for retail installations. Whatever the cause, the end result is customer frustration with the ALEC and irreparable harm to the new ALEC/end user relationship.

As in other instances, BellSouth's data highlights the magnitude of the problem. For DS-1s that BellSouth provides to KMC in Florida, for example, one out of every four circuits that BellSouth installed in January, 2002 failed within 30 days.¹⁰⁶ For two-wire analog loops (designed), 8% of the BellSouth installs for KMC failed within the first 30 days after installation, on average, over the last eight months.¹⁰⁷ In contrast, BellSouth's retail offering of the same service fails less than 1%.¹⁰⁸ This disparity is unacceptable. Customers who switch their service to an ALEC expect to receive quality service. If the ALECs' circuits fail within the first 30 days of their new relationship with the customer, irreparable damage is done to the ALEC-customer relationship since the ALEC is viewed as an unreliable provider of telecommunications.

¹⁰⁶ Tr. at 267.

¹⁰⁷ Tr. at 267. This is consistent with ALEC-aggregate performance, which indicates that nearly 13% of ALEC loops failed within the first 30 days (metric B.2.19.8.1.1, November, 2001).

¹⁰⁸ *Id.*

2. Proposed Solution

Remedy payments alone are not likely to solve this problem. As ALECs have experienced in Georgia, Louisiana, and other ILEC territories, remedy payments do not always effect change.¹⁰⁹ The payments merely become a part of BellSouth's cost of doing business in the state while it protects market share.¹¹⁰ Accordingly, ALECs propose that BellSouth provide nondiscriminatory access to loop facilities, undertaking the steps noted above, and that it not be considered to be checklist compliant until such time as its performance demonstrates parity.

H. BellSouth Does Not Accept Troubles It Causes During Migration (Priority 8)

AT&T has encountered the problem that when a customer's service has been impaired during a migration, such as with missing features or services, BellSouth's Maintenance Center will not accept AT&T's trouble report until after 5:00 p.m. regardless of the time of the customer's conversion and where the provisioning error is attributable to BellSouth. If a customer is migrated in the morning, this means that his service is incorrect for a lengthy period of time and the ALEC is powerless to fix the problem. From the customer's eyes, the ALEC appears to be inefficient and unreliable. Accordingly, BellSouth should be required to accept the trouble from the ALEC and immediately correct the provisioning errors.

I. BellSouth Does Not Notify ALECs Once Repairs Are Complete (Priority 9)

BellSouth does not call ALECs to inform them when the repairs ALECs have requested are complete. If no such call is made, ALECs must expend resources to confirm the repairs are made and to conduct its own testing of the service. ALECs also require timely notification so that they can contact their customers to inform them that the repair is complete. BellSouth

¹⁰⁹ Tr. at 268.

technicians should be required to call ALECs and record in the trouble ticket logs with whom they spoke, or the date, time, and phone number called if no one answers the call. KPMG Consulting, Inc. ("KCI") should audit this information.

VII. BELLSOUTH'S PERFORMANCE DATA REMAINS UNRELIABLE

BellSouth's performance data continue to suffer from data integrity problems that preclude ALECs and this Commission from using it as an accurate indicator of BellSouth's performance. At the workshop, ALECs testified that they believe BellSouth's data is inaccurate.¹¹¹ ALECs' belief is well founded. BellSouth's performance reports are wrong, data is missing, and BellSouth applies unauthorized exclusions to its performance measures calculations. Moreover, the raw data BellSouth provides is insufficient to satisfy this Commission's Order¹¹² and to permit ALECs to validate BellSouth's performance reports. BellSouth attempts to address these issues in part, through claims of recent fixes and promises of future fixes. Without independent auditing of the issues identified below, this Commission cannot be assured that BellSouth's recent fixes have corrected the important data integrity issues ALECs have identified.¹¹³ Additionally, this Commission should give BellSouth firm deadlines by which to implement its "future fixes." Once these fixes are put in place, the Commission should require KCI to verify that the deficiencies have been corrected.

(Footnote cont'd from previous page.)

¹¹⁰ Tr. at 268.

¹¹¹ Tr. at 254.

¹¹² Order, *In re: Investigation into the establishment of operations support systems permanent performance measures for incumbent local exchange telecommunications companies*, Docket 000121-TP, Order No. PSC-01-1819-FOF-TP, Sept. 10, 2001 at 56, 115.

¹¹³ KCI is already reviewing two of BellSouth's recent fixes related to BellSouth's Average Completion Notice Interval.

A. BellSouth's Performance Reports And Performance Data Are Inaccurate (Priority 1)

1. The Problems

BellSouth's performance reports are wrong and are missing data. Some of the data included in the reports is inaccurate. Of particular concern is the fact that BellSouth's Flow Through reports continue to be wrong. For example, BellSouth's December 2001 Flow Through report indicated that Network Telephone submitted 73 LSRs via TAG.¹¹⁴ The data cannot be correct because Network Telephone does not operate a TAG interface with BellSouth.¹¹⁵ ITC also explained that a number of its orders are missing from the Flow Through report.¹¹⁶

In other instances, BellSouth's performance reports are missing data. ITC, for example, told this Commission that it has been "impossible" for it to reconcile its data because trouble tickets present in ITC's systems were not included in BellSouth's TAFI system or in BellSouth's raw data.¹¹⁷

Network Telephone has done extensive research on the BellSouth PMAP system. It consistently finds data missing, and "reposts" of data that just as often inflict new errors as fix any previous data. In addition, Miscellaneous Reports are created without proper descriptions of data content. While the Raw Data User's Manual ("RDUM") is updated monthly with BellSouth's changes, no data dictionary is provided for the Miscellaneous Reports.

¹¹⁴ Tr. at 249.

¹¹⁵ Tr. at 249.

¹¹⁶ Tr. at 254.

¹¹⁷ Tr. at 254.

BellSouth also inaccurately reports data for its Acknowledgement Message Timeliness and Completeness measure. AT&T compared the LSR volumes in the acknowledgement raw data with the volumes in BellSouth's Flow Through report and discovered numerous discrepancies. When presented with this problem, BellSouth offered conflicting and inconsistent explanations for this data inaccuracy.¹¹⁸

2. Proposed Solution

ALECs believe the best solution for all of these issues is to require KCI to review carefully these issues as part of its audit of BellSouth's OSS.

B. BellSouth Applies Unauthorized Exclusions to Its Data (Priority 2)

1. The Problems

In order for ALECs to confidently rely on BellSouth's data and use it to verify the accuracy of BellSouth's reports, BellSouth must calculate its measures as set forth in its Service Quality Management ("SQM") Plan. As ALECs explained in the hearing, BellSouth applies unlisted, and therefore unauthorized, exclusions to its data. These unauthorized exclusions cause

¹¹⁸ BellSouth informed AT&T that the comparison was invalid because AT&T had not added fatal rejects and LNP orders. Additionally, BellSouth provided other reasons why the reports failed to match. First, BellSouth explained that the EDI volumes would not match and should not match because "EDI returns one acknowledgment per transmission (or envelope) even though the transmission may contain multiple LSRs;" whereas the flow-through report provides information at the LSR level. Letter dated January 21, 2002, from Bennett L. Ross, BellSouth to K.C. Timmons, AT&T at 1 (attached as Exhibit 4). This argument is in error because AT&T receives acknowledgements for individual LSRs it sends to BellSouth. Additionally, BellSouth claimed that the LSR volumes for TAG and LENS reported in the Acknowledgment raw data file and the Flow-Through report should not match because "TAG returns acknowledgments on messages related to pre-order activity, which are not reflected on the Flow-Through report." *Id.* BellSouth's explanation does not ring true for the UNE-P orders that AT&T referenced in its correspondence to BellSouth on these issues. In this regard, UNE-P pre-ordering activity is all conducted within the actual LSR that is sent to BellSouth via LENS; therefore, no additional acknowledgments for pre-order activity should be associated with such orders. Additionally, taking BellSouth's explanation at face value, there should be pre-order acknowledgements in TAG for every LSR that is sent via EDI. Based upon AT&T's examination of its December data, this clearly is not the case. Thus, BellSouth's explanations regarding the discrepancies in volumes reflected in its reports are inconsistent with its own data. AT&T has re-conducted its analysis regarding LNP and fatal rejects and the discrepancies continue.

ALECs to struggle to validate BellSouth's data because BellSouth's exclusions skew the results of important performance measures.

Covad, for example, discovered that BellSouth was excluding a high number of orders from the order completion measure because BellSouth applied an L code to these orders incorrectly¹¹⁹ and thereby rendered the order completion measure meaningless.¹²⁰ This is not an insignificant problem: in November 2001, BellSouth excluded one third of Covad's orders.¹²¹ KCI is not presently investigating the L code problem, and¹²² under the current scope of the test, KCI will not do so in the future.¹²³

In addition to improperly L coding orders and then excluding them, BellSouth also applies the following unauthorized exclusions to its self-reported ALEC data provided in PMAP. For example, BellSouth's Average Completion Notice Interval ("ACNI") is incomplete because BellSouth excludes:

- Completion notices issued in one month for orders completed in a previous month are excluded from the measure calculation and raw data;¹²⁴
- Orders submitted directly into SOCS;¹²⁵

¹¹⁹ L coded orders are orders in which the ALEC has requested completion within a longer or shorter interval than BellSouth's standard interval.

¹²⁰ According to BellSouth's SQM, L coded orders may be excluded properly from the order completion measure. However, Covad's orders should have been completed within BellSouth's standard interval.

¹²¹ Tr. at 253. At the time of the hearing, Covad had not completed its analysis of whether all of these orders were improperly L coded by BellSouth.

¹²² Tr. at 253.

¹²³ Tr. at 254.

¹²⁴ BellSouth has indicated that a "fix" is targeted for May data. This assertion cannot be confirmed until the final May data is available on July 1, 2002.

- Completion Notices for Standalone LNP orders (excluded from the ACNI measure and raw data);¹²⁶ and
- Completion Notices for LSRs classified as projects (excluded from the ACNI measure and raw data).

2. Proposed Solutions

ALECs propose that this Commission resolve BellSouth's improper L coding of orders by requiring KCI to audit BellSouth's performance data using commercial ALEC data. The Commission has already tasked KCI with reviewing certain problems with the ACNI measure and with validating BellSouth's claim regarding directory order listings. Accordingly, KCI's review should be expanded to cover all of these data integrity issues.

C. **BellSouth Does Not Provide Raw Data Necessary to Verify the Accuracy of BellSouth's Reports (Priority 3)**

1. The Problems

BellSouth continues to withhold data that would permit ALECs and the Commission to analyze BellSouth's performance on important order types. BellSouth, for example, continues to exclude LSRs classified as projects from its raw data. As AT&T explained, if a customer places an order for 15 lines or greater, BellSouth classifies that order as a "project."¹²⁷ Without the raw

(Footnote cont'd from previous page.)

¹²⁵ BellSouth has provided ALECs flawed explanations and nonresponsive answers regarding the completeness of BellSouth's acknowledgement data and regarding completion notices submitted directly into SOCS. This Commission should require KCI to work with BellSouth and ALECs to resolve these issues.

¹²⁶ As AT&T explained, this problem affects thousands of AT&T's orders in Florida. Tr. at 248. In Georgia, BellSouth admitted this is a problem they are working to resolve. Mr. Varner's assertion that these LSRs were AT&T-generated trigger orders is baseless. BellSouth, not AT&T, issues trigger orders.

¹²⁷ Tr. at 246.

data related to the project, an ALEC cannot identify or monitor the service its largest customers receive from BellSouth.¹²⁸

Nor does BellSouth provide sufficient raw data to validate its Flow Through reports. For example, BellSouth does not provide an LSR detail for the LNP flow-through report. In connection with the on-going performance measures proceedings in Georgia, BellSouth indicated that a form of the underlying data, but not the LSR detail, is now available upon request. AT&T requested the information on February 4, 2002. BellSouth has not yet provided this information.

During the course of the workshop, BellSouth claimed it now includes directory listing orders in FOC and rejection measures.¹²⁹ In a letter to AT&T dated February 18, 2002, however, BellSouth stated, "to the extent they are not excluded from a particular measure, directory listing orders also appear in the raw data files for each of the ordering measures."¹³⁰ Accordingly, it appears that BellSouth is once again applying unauthorized exclusions of data from its raw data files.

2. Proposed Solution

ALECs propose that BellSouth provide ALECs access to all of its raw data, including raw data for project orders, BellSouth's LNP flow-through report, and directory listing orders.

¹²⁸ Mr. Varner believes this issue is simply one of whether BellSouth must provide raw data that is not used in calculating performance reports. (Workshop presentation of Alphonso J. Varner at 18) Even if Mr. Varner's supposition is true, this Commission has ordered BellSouth to provide ALECs electronic access to raw data so that ALECs can verify the accuracy of BellSouth's reports. FL Order 9/10/01 in 000121-TP at 56 and 115.

¹²⁹ Tr. at 265. KCI is in the process of reviewing this information. Under the current schedule, KCI's data integrity review will not be complete until July 2002.

¹³⁰ Letter dated February 18, 2002, from Bennett L. Ross, BellSouth, to K.C. Timmons, AT&T at 3 (attached without enclosures as Exhibit 5).

D. Report Validation Problems BellSouth Claims Are Corrected Must Be Validated (Priority 4)

In its Commercial Experience Issues list submitted to the Commission prior to the workshop, AT&T noted that ALECs could not replicate FOC and reject intervals from the raw data provided by BellSouth.¹³¹ BellSouth's Mr. Varner alleges that BellSouth has corrected this problem as of December 2001 for AT&T and as of January 2002 for ALECs.¹³² While it appears that BellSouth has resolved this issue for AT&T's data, it is not clear whether the January fix will resolve this problem for all ALECs. Accordingly, KCI should be tasked with reviewing this important area.¹³³

Similarly, AT&T informed this Commission that it could not replicate the FOC and reject intervals from PMAP raw data for LSRs submitted in one month but FOC'd or rejected in a different month because it did not have the necessary data. BellSouth has now provided this data to AT&T.¹³⁴ AT&T's preliminary review indicates BellSouth now provides the missing information. KCI, however, should review this data as part of the third-party test on a going-forward basis.

¹³¹ AT&T Commercial Experience Issues, filed Feb. 4, 2002 in dockets 960786-B-TL and 981834-7P at 4.

¹³² Workshop presentation of Alphonso J. Varner at 18.

¹³³ ALECs, moreover, are unsure why BellSouth did not implement a universal fix for this problem in December. Accordingly, this Commission should require BellSouth to investigate whether a data integrity problem brought by one ALEC affects all ALECs, and if a problem is discovered, BellSouth should implement a concurrent universal fix.

¹³⁴ At the workshop, Mr. Varner stated that AT&T possessed the data necessary to replicate this interval. At the time the issue list was filed, AT&T had not received the data.

Finally, as BellSouth admits, its jeopardy notice interval has been incorrect for the almost a year.¹³⁵ This Commission should require BellSouth to correct this measure and, once corrected, have KCI audit this measure.

VIII. BELLSOUTH'S CHANGE CONTROL PROCESS REMAINS INADEQUATE -- SIGNIFICANT CHANGES ARE NECESSARY (PRIORITY 1)

ALECs agree that BellSouth's CCP is so deficient that any modifications that operate to the ALECs' benefit are welcome. BellSouth's most recent MSS report confirms this assertion. In January 2002, BellSouth failed 2 of 3 change control measures. Some of the modifications that BellSouth has made, or proposes to make, will benefit the ALECs. However, as long as BellSouth retains its power to make the final, exclusive determination as to what change requests will be implemented, and when – a power that BellSouth's modifications do not alter – the CCP will not afford competitors a meaningful opportunity to compete. BellSouth must make additional, substantial revisions in the CCP in order for the process to be meaningful.¹³⁶

At the request of the Georgia Public Service Commission Staff, a coalition of ALECs submitted a "red-line" version of the CCP Document to that Commission on January 30, 2002 containing the ALECs desired changes to the process.¹³⁷ The following are examples of the substantial revisions the ALECs included in that red-line:

- Implementation deadlines for all types of changes should be included. This will ensure that the proper level of resources is committed to support the implementation of changes. Type 4 and Type 5 changes should be implemented no later than 60 weeks after their prioritization.

¹³⁵ Tr. at 264. The jeopardy notice interval has been incorrect since June 2001.

¹³⁶ As ALECs explained, BellSouth's 40% proposal does nothing other than maintain the status quo.

¹³⁷ A copy of that red-line was provided directly to the FPSC Staff when it was submitted in Georgia and is attached as Exhibit 6.

- A “go/no go vote” process should be implemented for software releases. This will ensure that a scheduled change will go forward only with the ALECs’ consent and that ALECs can stop a planned change that may cause problems in the OSS, based on testing or on a review of documentation when testing is unavoidable.
- In sizing and sequencing change requests prioritized by the ALECs, BellSouth should begin with the top-priority items and continue down through the list until the capacity constraints have been reached for each future release. This will ensure that ALECs have a meaningful voice in prioritization, and that the priorities assigned by the ALECs will be implemented.
- A new position should be created within the CCP, the “Designated ALEC Co-Moderator.” That person would function as a co-moderator in presenting and monitoring the progress of pending change requests and within the BellSouth internal process.
- ALECs should be given the opportunity to meet directly with the BellSouth managers who make the final decisions on implementation and prioritization of change requests, along with their subject matter experts (“SMEs”). This will ensure that ALECs can discuss change requests directly with the BellSouth personnel who actually make the final decisions on change requests and their SMEs, rather than merely with “go-betweens.”
- BellSouth should be required to provide ALECs with a written explanation whenever it rejects a proposed change request. This will assist the ALECs in determining whether a valid basis exists for the rejection. In any case where BellSouth rejects a proposed change request, its explanation should not simply be that the change is “against policy” (an explanation that BellSouth has frequently given in the past). Instead, BellSouth should explain precisely why the change was rejected. In addition, BellSouth should be required to make “requests for additional information” about a change request only when it legitimately needs such information – and not to use such requests as a means of delaying or thwarting ALEC-initiated change requests.
- No arbitrary limitation should be placed on the number of BellSouth releases each year. This will ensure that changes are not unduly delayed by a limited number of releases, and that changes will be implemented more according to demand and ALEC need.
- BellSouth should not consider any internally generated change requests unique to the ALEC wholesale OSS within its internal process until after the request has been subject to prioritization by the ALECs. Thus, the scope of the CCP should be expanded to include: (1) the development of new interfaces; and (2) changes to linkage systems such as LEO and LESOG, and BellSouth’s legacy systems. This will ensure that the CCP encompasses all changes to the OSS that directly affect ALECs.

- The existing definition of “ALEC affecting changes” subject to the CCP should be amended to clarify that it is broad, rather than restrictive, in nature. The definition should make clear that the BellSouth linkage and legacy systems and processes above are also “ALEC affecting.” ALECs should be provided notice and an opportunity to test when these systems/processes are changed.
- The CCP should be amended to make clear that it includes changes to BellSouth’s billing systems. As previously stated, notwithstanding the language of the CCP document, BellSouth currently (and erroneously) maintains that billing is outside the scope of the CCP.
- The materials (“Change Review Package”) that BellSouth is required to distribute before a change review meeting should include not only a schedule of releases, but a description of the capacity of each release. This will ensure that the ALECs will learn in advance of any capacity limitations of the release.
- Each quarter, BellSouth should provide a release capacity forecast covering the remainder of the current calendar year and the following calendar year, including descriptions of the items to be included in each future release. The quarterly report that BellSouth has agreed to provide, by contrast, would encompass only year-to-date capacity used for ALEC requests, and the next scheduled release – not other future releases.
- The CAVE testing environment should be upgraded to meet the ALECs’ needs as stated in the original change request and subsequently determined to be required by use of CAVE as implemented. BellSouth should not require ALECs to use codes other than their own in the testing environment, or limit the number of participating ALECs or test scenarios used in that environment.

Finally, one of the most fundamental changes that BellSouth can make to its CCP is to make ALECs partners in the process. This Commission understood that ALECs “want to look at the criteria that is being used for ALEC changes and they also want to look at the criteria BellSouth uses.”¹³⁸ BellSouth still has not understood that point. No matter how many times and in how many different venues ALECs have presented this idea to BellSouth, BellSouth has resisted incorporating ALECs as part of a real-time team. As the workshop made clear,

¹³⁸ Tr. at 235.

BellSouth still does not want to include ALECs as partners in the CCP.¹³⁹ This is perhaps, the most striking difference between the practical implementation of BellSouth's and Verizon's CCPs. Similarly worded, or even identical plans, can have dramatically different results based on their administration. Verizon includes ALECs and treats them as partners. BellSouth excludes ALECs and prevents them from having an effective voice in the CCP.

The ALEC "red-line" and BellSouth response "green-line" provide clearly defined positions upon which the parties and regulators can (1) continue to evolve the process through negotiation and (2) resolve issues that persist following negotiation. A "Change Control Process Improvement Workshop" has been scheduled for March 28, 2002 to continue the negotiation process. The Florida PSC should monitor this workshop and be prepared to render timely decisions on those issues upon which the parties are unable to reach agreement.

IX. CONCLUSION

The testimony ALECs presented at the workshop reveals significant deficiencies exist in all facets of BellSouth's OSS. These problems must be resolved if ALECs are to compete effectively in Florida.

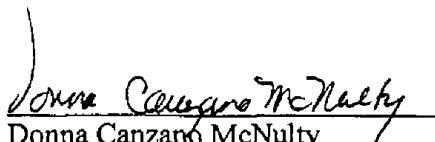
As ALECs have shown, many of the solutions to these problems only require BellSouth to fulfill its existing obligations or follow its current procedures. Other solutions involve re-training employees or permitting ALECs to participate in the decision-making processes that directly impact their businesses. Other solutions, for example those related to data integrity, may require some effort on the part of BellSouth. Providing accurate and complete data, however, is

¹³⁹ Throughout BellSouth's response to the ALEC "red-line" CCP, which was filed with the GPSC on February 15, 2002, BellSouth maintains that it needs to exclude ALECs from the process in order to conduct its business.

of such fundamental importance, this Commission should require BellSouth to implement whatever corrections are necessary to remedy this important problem.

BellSouth has provided response after response to the issues ALECs raised at this workshop and in other proceedings. Solutions are necessary for these important problems. This Commission should require BellSouth to implement the solutions ALECs have proposed and should require KCI to verify that the deficiencies have been corrected. Only then can this Commission be assured BellSouth is providing nondiscriminatory access to its OSS and be in a position to recommend approval of BellSouth's 271 application.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED this 18th day of March, 2002.


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CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I HEREBY CERTIFY that a copy of the foregoing was furnished to the following parties by U.S. Mail or Hand Delivery (*) this 18th day of March, 2002.

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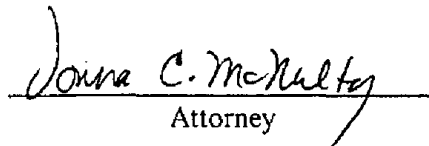
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